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FRENCH PARLIAMENTARY DEADLOCK DEVELOPING INTO SERIOUS CRISIS

French president Auriol has let it be known that he may resign if Andre Marie, the fourth candidate to seek investiture as premier in the current parliamentary crisis, fails to form a government. Auriol would then be called on by Herriot, president of the National Assembly, to form a "government of public welfare and national unity." Auriol could probably induce his Socialist Party to leave the opposition, and his dramatic gesture would facilitate the formation of a coalition. His resignation would entail a presidential election within 10 days, however, and in parliament's present state of division it is hard to see which, if any, candidate could obtain the necessary absolute majority.

The American embassy in Paris considers Auriol's threat illustrative of the growing impression in French political circles that the present interregnum is a real crisis. There is a growing feeling among the deputies, now dissatisfied with piecemeal and compromise solutions, that conventional methods may not suffice to reconstitute a government with an adequate program and powers to meet the situation.

Mendes-France's investiture speech on 3 June appears to have kindled new hopes in the assembly that a strong government can be formed on the basis of a new left-center majority. Mendes-France had refused to dicker with the party leaders and appealed directly to the assembly. His bold program fired the imagination of the rank and file, but the center party leaders combined with rightist elements to defeat him. The closeness of a left-center majority, however, is now apparent.

Bidault's subsequent failure to obtain investiture and Pinay's refusal to seek the premiership emphasize the difficulty facing a right-center candidate.

Marie's chief support comes from the right wing of the Radical Socialist party, and he will almost certainly be refused Socialist support. He is now experiencing difficulty in getting a majority on the basis of a minimum program, because the various parties are bargaining with him for their

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support. While his chances now appear definitely poorer than when his candidacy was first broached, the growing pressure for some semblance of agreement may give him the necessary majority. If he does obtain the premiership at the expense of the financial reforms demanded by the earlier candidates, his government cannot be expected to last beyond the summer recess. His overthrow before November 1954 would permit the president to dissolve the assembly and call for new elections.

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